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PROCESS OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Working paper submitted by Australia

Australia attaches the greatest importance to nuclear disarmament. In this context we support the process of bilateral negotiations and endorse the stated commitment by all nuclear-weapon States to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The purpose of reviewing the steps taken in the process of nuclear disarmament in the Disarmament Commission is to identify areas in this process where the Working Group can develop some principles or recommendations to help take forward practically, aspects of this process.

The process of nuclear disarmament was well documented in the report submitted by the Secretary-General last year entitled "Comprehensive study on nuclear weapons". 1/

The Secretary-General's study notes that since the dawn of the nuclear age almost half a century ago, efforts have been made in the world community to deal with the various implications of the existence of nuclear weapons. The study notes that arms limitation and disarmament efforts have been pursued both within and outside the United Nations framework and groups them as follows:

Constraints on the possession of nuclear weapons:

- The non-proliferation Treaty;
- Nuclear-weapon-free zones:
  - Treaty of Rarotonga;
  - Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Limitations on stationing of nuclear weapons:

- The Antarctic Treaty;
- The outer space Treaty;
- The seabed Treaty.

Limitations and reductions of nuclear weapons:

- INF Treaty;
- START Talks;
- SALT Talks.

Limitations on testing of nuclear explosive devices:

- CTBT discussions;
- Conclusion and ratification of TTBT and PNET;
- PTBT.

Constraints on the use of nuclear weapons:

- No tangible progress has been made towards the conclusion of an agreement regarding the non-use of nuclear weapons.

Consideration in the General Assembly:

- A great many resolutions;
- Special sessions on disarmament.

Security assurances

CBMS

Nuclear weapons and international law.

Areas in which this Working Group could make some progress could include:

- Non-proliferation;
- Nuclear-weapon-free zones;
- Security assurances (negative and positive);
- Confidence-building measures;
- Nuclear weapons and international law.

This is not because the other areas outlined above are not important but because work is already being conducted on these in a number of forums based on principles and on which there is a wide degree of understanding.

Notes

1/ A/45/373.